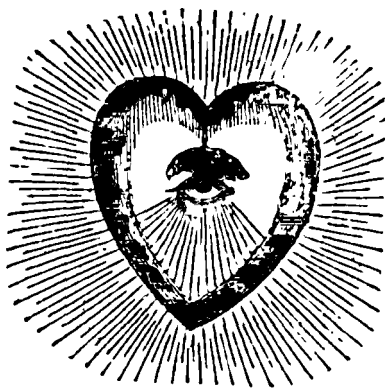


THE



SEER.

All ye inhabitants of the world, and dwellers on the earth, See Ye, when He
lifteth up an Ensign on the Mountains.—*Isaiah* XVIII, 3.

VOL. I.

JANUARY, 1853.

No. 1.

PROSPECTUS OF "THE SEER."

THE SEER is a title assumed for this Periodical in commemoration of JOSEPH SMITH, the great SEER of the last days, who, as an instrument in the hands of the Lord, laid the foundation of the Kingdom of God, preparatory to the second coming of the Messiah to reign with universal dominion over all the Earth.

The pages of the SEER will be mostly occupied with original matter, illustrating the doctrines of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, as revealed in both ancient and modern Revelations. The Prophecies, relating to the grand and remarkable events of the last days, will be carefully examined and unfolded. The doctrine of *Celestial Marriage, or Marriage for all eternity*, as believed and practised by the Saints in Utah Territory, will be clearly explained. The views of the Saints in regard to the *ancient Patriarchal Order of Matrimony, or Plurality of Wives*, as developed in a Revelation, given through JOSEPH, the SEER, will be fully published. The Celestial origin and pre-existence of the spirits of men—their first estate or probation in a previous world—the great benefits, derived by descending from Heaven, and entering fleshly tabernacles, and keeping the laws of

their second estate, and their final redemption and exaltation, as Gods, in their future state—are subjects which will, more or less, occupy the pages of the SEER.

It is hoped that the President elect, the Hon. Members of Congress, the Heads of the various Departments of the National Government, the high-minded Governors and Legislative Assemblies of the several States and Territories, the Ministers of every Religious denomination, and all the inhabitants of this great Republic, will patronize this Periodical, that through the medium of our own writings they may be more correctly and fully informed in regard to the peculiar doctrines, views, practices, and expectations of the Saints who now flourish in the Mountain Territory, and who will eventually flourish over the whole Earth. And we say to all nations, subscribe for the SEER, and we promise you a True and Faithful description of all the principal features, characterizing this great and last "dispensation of the fulness of times."

The SEER will be published Monthly, at \$1 per annum, in advance.

ORSON PRATT, *Editor,*
Washington City, D. C.

DECEMBER 21, 1852.

First Epistle of ORSON PRATT to the Saints scattered throughout the United States and British Provinces—Greeting :

DEAR BRETHERN : Having been appointed by the First Presidency with the sanction of a special Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, held in Great Salt Lake City on the 28th of August, 1852, to preside over the Saints throughout the United States and British Provinces in North America ; in accordance therewith, I have left my family and my home in the peaceful vales of the mountains ; and, after crossing the wild desert plains which intervene between the happy land of the Saints and the Gentile lands of strife and wickedness, I find myself within the field of my mission: that the Saints may more fully learn the nature of my mission among them, I will insert the following:

LETTER OF APPOINTMENT.

This certifies that Professor Orson Pratt of the University of Deseret, one of the Apostles of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, is appointed by us, with the sanction of the special Conference, convened in this city on the twenty-eighth day of August, A. D. One Thousand Eight Hundred and Fifty-two, to preside over the affairs of the Church throughout the United States and the British Provinces in North America ; and also, to write and Publish Periodicals, Pamphlets, Books, &c., illustrative of the principles and doctrines of the Church, and to do all other things necessary for the advancement of the work of the Lord among all nations. ELDER PRATT is authorized and required to receive and collect tithing of the Saints through all his field of labors: and we request the Elders and other officers and members of the Church to give diligent heed to his counsels as the words of life and salvation, and assist him to funds to enable him to travel, print, establish book agencies, and perform all other duties of his calling, and the blessings of our Father in Heaven shall rest upon them. BRO. PRATT is one of the Perpetual

Emigrating Fund Company, and is hereby appointed and authorized to act as Traveling-Agent in the United States and British Provinces in North America, and he is instructed to collect, and disburse and aid to promote the emigration of poor Saints to the valleys of the mountains.

BRO. ORSON PRATT is too well and favorably known to need any testimonial further than his own presence and acquaintance to secure the esteem and confidence of all among whom his lot may be cast. His acquirements and attainments are of the highest order, and possessing, as he eminently does, every requisite of an honorable and high-minded gentleman, we take great pleasure in recommending him to the kindness and consideration of all good men.

BRIGHAM YOUNG,
HEBER C. KIMBALL,
WILLARD RICHARDS,
Presidency of said Church.

Signed and sealed at Great Salt Lake City, U. T., Sept. 13, 1852.

The principal features of my mission are contained in the foregoing letter ; but ever feeling a deep interest in the welfare of the saints, you will permit me, through the medium of this epistle to impart to you such instructions as the Holy Spirit may whisper to my mind. I wish to ask the saints who still remain scattered abroad, Do you enjoy as great a measure of the Spirit of God as when you were first baptized into this kingdom ? Or are your minds barren ? Your understandings unfruitful ? Your souls in darkness ? and your feelings cold and indifferent towards the great work which you have embraced, and which once made you joyful and happy ? If this be your condition, it is of the utmost importance that you know the causes of these unhappy changes in your feelings. Is it because the Lord has changed and forgotten to be gracious ? Is it because the fulness of his gospel does not produce the same

effects or happiness now, as it did in ancient times? Is it because the Book of Mormon, or any of the Revelations given through Joseph, the Seer, have failed to accomplish those purposes for which they were sent? Is it because the saints have passed through great tribulation, and have been driven from city to city, from State to State, and finally banished from this great Republic to seek a home in the wild glens of the Rocky Mountains? Is it because God has forsaken his people and will no longer show them mercy? No, verily, no; none of these causes have conspired to drive away the Comforter from your hearts, or to envelope you in darkness, or to make you cold, and indifferent, and unhappy. But the principal cause of your unpleasant and unhappy state of mind, is your own disobedience to one of the most important commands which God has given to his people in this last dispensation, namely: to flee out of Babylon, and gather themselves together, and stand in holy places, that they may escape the plagues and desolating scourges which the Lord has decreed to pour out upon the nations, because of their great sins and wickedness which continually cry unto the heavens for vengeance. Can any saint neglect so important a command, when it is within their power to keep it, and still be justified, and retain the peaceable Spirit of the Lord? No: the Spirit of the Lord is grieved with such, and will, by degrees, withdraw from them, and they will grope in the dark, and be liable to be overcome by temptation, and be led captive by the will of the Devil: such ones, not having the Spirit that leads into all truth, are liable to be deceived by the doctrines of men and Devils; for the Lord will frequently suffer strong delusions to overpower such that their damnation may be the greater, because they profess to know the Lord, and yet will not obey Him. Remember the word of the Lord which came by the mouth of Joseph, the Seer, saying, "Hearken and hear, O ye my people, saith the Lord and your God, ye whom I de-

light to bless with the greatest blessings, ye that hear me; and ye that hear me not, will I curse, that have professed my name, with the heaviest of all cursings." Have you hearkened to the word of God? Have you exerted yourselves to the utmost to flee from Babylon? If not, no wonder that you are in darkness—no wonder that the peaceable Spirit has been grieved from your bosom. Repent, therefore, speedily, and obey the voice of the Lord and gather yourselves among his people, lest the destroyer lay hold upon you in an hour you think not, and you perish in disobedience, and your name be cut off from the generations of Zion. If you will awake from the slumber of death which has seized upon you, and use every exertion to obey the voice of the Lord your God, His anger shall be turned away from you, and He will show you mercy, and His Spirit shall be restored unto you again, and His hand shall be stretched out over you to shield and protect you, and to gather you even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings to save them from the approaching storms; so shall the Lord your God save you, and comfort your hearts, and make you to sing with joy and gladness, and you shall be His people, and He will be the Lord your God. Awake then, O awake! flee to the mountains for refuge! For a day of trouble is at hand—a day of fierce battle and war—a day of mourning and lamentation for widows and orphans whose husbands and fathers shall fall in battle: it shall be the day of the Lord's controversy for His people—a day of recompence for the innocent blood of prophets and saints which has been shed among this nation.

The time is drawing nigh for these things to be fulfilled; for this nation have rejected the Book of Mormon, which the Lord brought forth by the ministering of Angels, and sent unto them by the hands of His servants; they have rejected the Church of Christ which the Lord God in mercy established in their midst; they have suffered His Saints

to be trampled upon by mobs, to be scourged, afflicted, abused, driven from their homes, deprived of the most sacred rights of American citizenship, and finally to be banished from their midst, and obliged to seek refuge in the solitary wilds and deserts of the Rocky Mountains. They have closed their doors, their synagogues, their eyes, and their hearts against one of the most glorious and important messages that ever saluted the ears of mortals; they have suffered one of the greatest, most renowned, and most celebrated prophets that ever lived upon the earth to be murdered in cold blood, without bringing the murderers to justice; they have suffered scores of innocent men, women, and children to be tortured, shot down, and butchered, in open day, by beings who afterwards boasted of their horrid deeds, and yet, no means are instituted to bring these guilty wretches to punishment. Does not the blood of the Saints and of prophets cry aloud to the Heavens for vengeance? And shall this nation escape the judgments decreed against them? And will the Almighty forbear to execute the vengeance written? Verily No. For in December, 1833, the word of the Lord came through JOSEPH, the SEER, concerning His Saints who had been driven from their homes in Jackson Co., Missouri, saying:

“Let them importune at the feet of the judge; and if he heed them not, let them importune at the feet of the Governor; and if the Governor heed them not, let them importune at the feet of the President; and if the President heed them not, then will the Lord arise and come forth out of His hiding place, and in His fury vex the nation, and in His hot displeasure, and in His fierce anger, in His time, will cut off those wicked, unfaithful, and unjust stewards, and appoint them their portion among hypocrites and unbelievers; even in outer darkness, where there is weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth. Pray ye, therefore, that their ears may be opened unto your cries, that I be may merci-

ful unto them, that these things may not come upon them.” (Book of Commandments, page 282, English edition.)

For nineteen years the Saints have importuned, according to this commandment. But have they obtained redress? No. The Judges and the Governor of the State of Missouri, instead of redressing our wrongs, suffered us, under the force of arms, to be killed, immured in dungeons, and banished from the State. The President, instead of restoring us to our homes and lands which we purchased of the National Government, suffered us to be deprived of the dearest rights of American citizenship, and to be banished by the force of arms from this great Republic to seek refuge among hostile savages in the barren wastes of the snowy mountains. The cries and importunities of the Saints for redress and protection, were met with the cold reply, “Your cause is just, but we have no power to protect you.” The Saints have long cried unto the Lord that He would open the ears and soften the hearts of the Rulers and Authorities of our country that they might execute justice and right in behalf of the suffering, down-trodden, exiled citizens of this great Republic, who have been, by the force of arms, driven into banishment. But their ears are closed to our cries, their eyes are shut to our sufferings, and their hearts hardened against the mourning and lamentations of widows and orphans, whose husbands and fathers have been cruelly martyred for the testimony of Jesus, and for the word of God. The cup of the iniquity of this nation is nearly full; and woe unto them, when the time shall come that they are fully ripe in their abominations, for they shall utterly perish from off the face of this choice land. and the land shall be left empty and desolate—yea, their cities shall be destroyed, and their houses shall be desolate. “For the Lord shall rise up as in mount Perazim; He shall be wroth as in the valley of Gibeon, that He may do His work, His strange work; and bring

to pass His act, His strange act." (Isa. 28 : 21.) Yea, He shall destroy and lay waste, and none shall hinder.

I will again say to the Saints scattered abroad in this land, do you wish deliverance in the day of trouble? If you do, arise and flee to the mountains, and prepare for the day of the Lord, for it is near. Let all the children of Zion go up into the mountains; for thus said the prophet, Isaiah, in his prophetic exhortation to the Zion of the last days, "*O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain.*" For "behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and His arm shall rule for Him: behold, His reward is with Him and His work before Him. He shall feed His flock like a shepherd: He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom." (Isa. 40: 9—11.) Isaiah clearly saw that before the second coming of the Lord, to rule "*with a strong hand,*" that Zion would be required to "get up into the high mountain." Many of the children of Zion have fulfilled this exhortation of Isaiah; and I now say to the balance of her children, "**GET THEE UP INTO THE HIGH MOUNTAIN,**" and sanctify yourselves that you may be as an ensign upon the mountains—a standard for the people unto whom the meek and virtuous of all nations shall flow. For thus said the prophet Isaiah, "He shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth." (Isaiah 11: 12.) This ensign remember was not to be set up in Palestine, where Isaiah lived at the time he delivered the prophecy, but it was to be set up "from afar," or at a great distance from that country: hence, he says, again, "And He will lift up an ensign to the nations *from far*, and will hiss unto them from the end of the earth: and behold, they shall come with speed swiftly." (Isa. 5: 26.) Four things are clearly predicted in this passage;—First, An ensign is to be lifted up to the nations by the Lord, Himself; secondly, this ensign was to be lifted up, not in the country where

Isaiah dwelt, but in a far country; thirdly, when this ensign should be set up, the Lord should hiss unto the nations, not from Palestine, but "from the ends of the earth," clearly indicating a message that should hiss forth from that distant country for the benefit of all nations; and lastly, a people from among these nations, should "come with speed swiftly," not by the slow process of travelling to which the ancients were accustomed, but "*they shall come with speed swiftly,*" indicating, no doubt, the powerful agency of steam by which that people should be gathered from among the nations *speedily swiftly* unto the standard or ensign lifted up. This standard or ensign was not to be raised among Judah or Israel, but among the Gentiles, for the benefit of both Israel and Judah; for then, as Isaiah says, in the foregoing quotation, both Israel and Judah will be gathered. That this standard was to be raised among the Gentiles, instead of Israel, is clearly predicted in another passage, as follows:—"Thus saith the Lord God, behold, I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people: and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders." (Isaiah 49: 22.) That this standard or ensign was not only to be set up by the Lord God, among the Gentiles, but that it was also to be lifted up on the mountains is also predicted by Isaiah as follows:—"All ye inhabitants of the world, and dwellers on the earth, **SEE YE, WHEN HE LIFTETH UP AN ENSIGN ON THE MOUNTAINS;** and when He bloweth a trumpet, hear ye." For afore the harvest, when the bud is perfect, and the sour grape is ripening in the flower, He shall both cut off the sprigs with pruning hooks, and take away and cut down the branches. They shall be left together unto the fowls of the mountains, and to the beasts of the earth; and the fowls shall summer upon them, and all the beasts of the earth shall winter upon them. In that time shall the present be brought unto the Lord of Hosts of a people scat-

tered and pealed, and from a people terrible from their beginning hitherto; a nation meted out and trodden under foot, whose land the rivers have spoiled, to the place of the name of the Lord of Hosts, the Mount Zion." (Isaiah 18: 3, 5, 6, 7.) The place, then, for the lifting up of the ensign is to be "*on the mountains,*" and that too just before "*the harvest*" or the end of the wicked world, when the Lord is to destroy a certain nation under the name of the sour grape, and they are to be left unburied for the fowls and beasts to summer and winter upon them. It will be perceived also, that "*all the inhabitants of the world, and the dwellers on the earth,*" are called upon to both see and hear, when the Lord lifts up that ensign on the mountains.

Under a deep sense of the important events which await this generation, I beg of Zion to bear with me, while I repeat again the prophetic exhortation of Isaiah—"O Zion, that bringest good tidings, Get thee up into the high mountain." Tarry not, lest you fall among the wicked, and are deprived of the blessings which the Lord has decreed to pour out upon Zion.

That Zion was to occupy an elevated position on the earth, is still further evident from the word of the Lord which came through Joseph, the Seer, in September, 1831, saying, "Behold I, the Lord, have made my church in these last days like unto a judge sitting on a HILL, or in a HIGH PLACE, to judge the nations; for it shall come to pass that the inhabitants of Zion shall judge all things pertaining to Zion; and liars and hypocrites shall be proved by them, and they who are not apostles and prophets shall be known. And even the bishop, who is a judge, and his counsellors, if they are not faithful in their stewardships, shall be condemned, and others shall be planted in their stead; for, behold, I say unto you that Zion shall flourish, and the glory of the Lord shall be upon her, *and she shall be an Ensign unto the people*, and there shall come unto her out of every nation under Heaven. And the day shall come when the nations of the earth

shall tremble because of her, and shall fear because of her terrible ones. The Lord hath spoken it. Amen." (Book of Covenants, page 156.)

In this extract the Lord predicted that Zion should "be an Ensign unto the people," "sitting on a hill or in a High Place," and that she should flourish. In another revelation, given through Joseph, the Seer, to James Covill in January 1831, the Lord says, "Thou art called to labor in my vineyard and to build up my church, and to bring forth Zion, *that it may rejoice upon the HILLS and flourish.*" (Doc. and Cov., page 212. And in March, 1831, the word of the Lord, again, came unto Joseph, the Seer, saying, "Before the great day of the Lord shall come, Jacob shall flourish in the wilderness, and the Lamanites" (meaning the American Indians) "shall blossom as the rose. *Zion shall flourish upon the hills, and rejoice upon the mountains,* and shall be assembled together unto the place which I have appointed." (page 218.) Thus we see that twenty-two years ago, it was foretold in great plainness that Zion should flourish and rejoice upon the hills and mountains; when these prophecies were given, we did not know, for many years, how nor when the Lord intended to fulfil them, but fifteen years after the prediction, the Lord suffered our enemies to rise against us, and we were driven by the force of arms from these States, and were obliged to flee to the mountains for refuge; thus, in an unexpected manner, Zion is placed in her appropriate position, and is truly beginning to flourish and rejoice upon the hills and mountains according to the predictions of Joseph, the prophet, and according to many predictions of the ancient prophets. O how wonderful are the dealings of God with His people! And how marvelously does He fulfil the words of inspiration! Though the Heavens and Earth pass away, yet the word of the Lord, spoken through Joseph, the Seer, shall not pass away, but every jot and tittle that has not already come to pass, shall be fulfilled in its time and season.

The Saints in the States and British Provinces are respectfully invited to become subscribers to this periodical, that through its pages they may learn more perfectly their duties, and have a knowledge of the times, and seasons, and purposes of the Most High in regard to the generation in which they live. Those who intend emigrating to the mountains, during the coming season, can, by notifying us of their intentions, have their paper sent by the mail to Utah. Where there are branches of the Church, we suggest that they appoint among themselves an agent, and have the whole number, taken in the branch, sent in one package to their agent; this arrangement will save us much trouble which would otherwise arise by being obliged to forward to each individual.

The Saints are likewise informed that we shall have constantly on hand for sale, at wholesale and retail, all the various works, mentioned in the catalogue, published on the last page of the Seer.

All these publications should be in the houses of all the saints, and should be diligently read, that they may be well instructed in all the great principles of eternal salvation, that through their faithfulness to the same they may enter into the fulness of celestial glory. With the most anxious desire for your welfare, I subscribe myself your humble servant and brother in the bonds of the gospel Covenant.

ORSON PRATT.

WASHINGTON, *Dec. 20, 1852.*

CELESTIAL MARRIAGE:

A REVELATION ON THE PATRIARCHAL ORDER OF MATRIMONY, OR PLURALITY OF WIVES.

Given to Joseph Smith, the Seer, in Nauvoo, July 12th, 1843.

1. Verily thus saith the Lord, unto you my servant Joseph, that inasmuch as you have enquired of my hand, to know and understand wherein I the Lord justified my servants, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; as also Moses, David, and Solomon, my servants, as touching the principle and doctrine of their having many wives, and concubines: Behold! and lo, I am the Lord thy God, and will answer thee as touching this matter: Therefore, prepare thy heart to receive and obey the instructions which I am about to give unto you; for all those, who have this law revealed unto them, must obey the same; for behold! I reveal unto you a new and an everlasting covenant, and if ye abide not that covenant, then are ye damned; for no one can reject this covenant, and be permitted to enter into my glory; for all who will have a blessing at my hands, shall abide the law which was appointed for that blessing, and the conditions thereof, as was instituted from before the foundations of the world: and as

pertaining to the new and everlasting covenant, it was instituted for the fulness of my glory; and he that receiveth a fulness thereof, must, and shall abide the law, or he shall be damned, saith the Lord God.

2. And verily I say unto you, that the conditions of this law are these: All covenants, contracts, bonds, obligations, oaths, vows, performances, connections, associations, or expectations, that are not made, and entered into, and sealed, by the Holy Spirit of promise, of him who is anointed, both as well for time and for all eternity, and that too most holy, by revelation and commandment, through the medium of mine anointed, whom I have appointed on the earth to hold this power, (and I have appointed unto my servant Joseph to hold this power in the last days, and there is never but one on the earth at a time, on whom this power and the keys of this priesthood are conferred,) are of no efficacy, virtue, or force, in and after the

resurrection from the dead; for all contracts that are not made unto this end, have an end when men are dead.

3. Behold! mine house is a house of order, saith the Lord God, and not a house of confusion. Will I accept of an offering, saith the Lord, that is not made in my name! Or, will I receive at your hands, that which I have not appointed! And will I appoint unto you, saith the Lord, except it be by law, even as I and my Father ordained unto you, before the world was! I am the Lord thy God, and I give unto you this commandment, that no man shall come unto the Father, but by me, or by my word which is my law, saith the Lord; and everything that is in the world, whether it be ordained of men, by thrones, or principalities, or powers, or things of name, whatsoever they may be, that are not by me, or by my word, saith the Lord, shall be thrown down, and shall not remain after men are dead, neither in nor after the resurrection, saith the Lord your God: for whatsoever things remaineth, are by me; and whatsoever things are not by me, shall be shaken and destroyed.

4. Therefore, if a man marry him a wife in the world, and he marry her not by me, nor by my word; and he covenant with her, so long as he is in the world, and she with him, their covenant and marriage is not of force when they are dead, and when they are out of the world; therefore, they are not bound by any law when they are out of the world; therefore, when they are out of the world, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are appointed angels in heaven, which angels are ministering servants, to minister for those, who are worthy of a far more, and an exceeding, and an eternal weight of glory; for these angels did not abide my law, therefore they cannot be enlarged, but remain separately and singly, without exaltation, in their saved condition, to all eternity, and from henceforth are not Gods, but are angels of God forever and ever.

5. And again, verily I say unto you, if a man marry a wife, and make a covenant with her for time, and for all

eternity, if that covenant is not by me, or by my word, which is my law, and is not sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise, through him whom I have annointed and appointed unto this power, then it is not valid, neither of force, when they are out of the world, because they are not joined by me, saith the Lord, neither by my word; when they are out of the world, it cannot be received there, because the angels and the Gods are appointed there, by whom they cannot pass; they cannot, therefore, inherit my glory, for my house is a house of order, saith the Lord God.

6. And again, verily I say unto you, if a man marry a wife by my word, which is my law, and by the new and everlasting covenant, and it is sealed unto them by the Holy Spirit of promise, by him who is annointed, unto whom I have appointed this power, and the keys of this priesthood, and it shall be said unto them, ye shall come forth in the first resurrection; and if it be after the first resurrection, in the next resurrection; and shall inherit thrones, kingdoms, principalities, and powers, dominions, all heights, and depths, then shall it be written in the Lamb's Book of Life, that he shall commit no murder, whereby to shed innocent blood; and if ye abide in my covenant, and commit no murder whereby to shed innocent blood, it shall be done unto them in all things whatsoever my servant hath put upon them, in time, and through all eternity; and shall be of full force when they are out of the world, and they shall pass by the angels, and the Gods, which are set there, to their exaltation and glory in all things, as hath been sealed upon their heads, which glory shall be a fulness and a continuation of the seeds forever and ever.

7. Then shall they be Gods, because they have no end; therefore shall they be from everlasting to everlasting, because they continue; then shall they be above all, because all things are subject unto them. Then shall they be Gods, because they have all power, and the angels are subject unto them.

8. Verily, verily I say unto you, except ye abide my law, ye cannot attain to this glory; for strait is the gate, and narrow the way, that leadeth unto the exaltation and continuation of the lives, and few there be that find it, because ye receive me not in the world, neither do ye know me. But if ye receive me in the world, then shall ye know me, and shall receive your exaltation, that where I am, ye shall be also. This is eternal lives to know the only wise and true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent. I am He. Receive ye, therefore, my law. Broad is the gate, and wide the way that leadeth to the deaths; and many there are that go in thereat; because they receive me not, neither do they abide in my law.

9. Verily, verily I say unto you, if a man marry a wife according to my word, and they are sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise, according to mine appointment, and he or she shall commit any sin or transgression of the new and everlasting covenant whatever, and all manner of blasphemies, and if they commit no murder, wherein they shed innocent blood,—yet they shall come forth in the first resurrection, and enter into their exaltation, but they shall be destroyed in the flesh, and shall be delivered unto the buffetings of Satan, unto the day of redemption, saith the Lord God.

10. The blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, which shall not be forgiven in the world, nor out of the world, is in that ye commit murder, wherein ye shed innocent blood, and assent unto my death, after ye have received my new and everlasting covenant, saith the Lord God; and he that abideth not this law, can in no wise enter into my glory, but shall be damned, saith the Lord.

11. I am the Lord thy God, and will give unto thee the law of my Holy Priesthood, as was ordained by me, and my Father, before the world was. Abraham received all things, whatsoever he received, by revelation and commandment, by my word, saith the Lord, and hath entered into

his exaltation, and sitteth upon his throne.

12. Abraham received promises concerning his seed, and of the fruit of his loins,—from whose loins ye are, viz, my servant Joseph,—which were to continue, so long as they were in the world; and as touching Abraham and his seed, out of the world, they should continue; both in the world and out of the world should they continue as innumerable as the stars; or, if ye were to count the sand upon the sea-shore, ye could not number them. This promise is yours, also, because ye are of Abraham, and the promise was made unto Abraham, and by this law are the continuation of the works of my Father, wherein he glorifieth himself. Go ye, therefore, and do the works of Abraham; enter ye into my law, and ye shall be saved. But if ye enter not into my law, ye cannot receive the promises of my Father, which he made unto Abraham.

13. God commanded Abraham, and Sarah gave Hagar to Abraham, to wife. And why did she do it? Because this was the law, and from Hagar sprang many people. This, therefore, was fulfilling, among other things, the promises. Was Abraham, therefore, under condemnation? Verily, I say unto you, *Nay*; for I the Lord commanded it. Abraham was commanded to offer his son Isaac; nevertheless, it was written thou shalt not kill. Abraham however, did not refuse, and it was accounted unto him for righteousness.

14. Abraham received concubines, and they bare him children, and it was accounted unto him for righteousness, because they were given unto him, and he abode in my law: as Isaac also, and Jacob did none other things than that which they were commanded; and because they did none other things than that which they were commanded, they have entered into their exaltation, according to the promises, and sit upon thrones; and are not angels, but are Gods. David also received many wives and concubines, as also Solomon, and

Moses my servant; as also many others of my servants, from the beginning of creation until this time; and in nothing did they sin, save in those things which they received not of me.

15. David's wives and concubines were given unto him, of me, by the hand of Nathan, my servant, and others of the prophets who had the keys of this power; and in none of these things did he sin against me, save in the case of Uriah and his wife; and, therefore, he hath fallen from his exaltation, and received his portion; and he shall not inherit them out of the world; for I gave them unto another, saith the Lord.

16. I am the Lord thy God, and I gave unto thee, my servant Joseph, an appointment, and restore all things; ask what ye will, and it shall be given unto you, according to my word; and as ye have asked concerning adultery, verily, verily I say unto you, if a man receiveth a wife in the new and everlasting covenant, and if she be with another man, and I have not appointed unto her by the holy anointing, she hath committed adultery, and shall be destroyed. If she be not in the new and everlasting covenant, and she be with another man, she has committed adultery; and if her husband be with another woman, and he was under a vow, he hath broken his vow, and hath committed adultery; and if she hath not committed adultery, but is innocent, and hath not broken her vow, and she knoweth it, and I reveal it unto you, my servant Joseph, then shall you have power, by the power of my Holy Priesthood, to take her, and give her unto him that hath not committed adultery, but hath been faithful, for he shall be made ruler over many; for I have conferred upon you the keys and power of the priesthood, wherein I restore all things, and make known unto you, all things, in due time.

17. And verily, verily I say unto you, that whatsoever you seal on earth, shall be sealed in heaven; and whatsoever you bind on earth, in my name, and by my word, saith the Lord, it shall be eternally bound in

the heavens; and whosoever sins you remit on earth, shall be remitted eternally in the heavens; and whosoever sins you retain on earth, shall be retained in heaven.

18. And again, verily I say, whomsoever you bless, I will bless; and whomsoever you curse, I will curse, saith the Lord; for I, the Lord, am thy God.

19. And again, verily I say unto you, my servant Joseph, that whatsoever you give on earth, and to whomsoever you give any one on earth, by my word, and according to my law, it shall be visited with blessings, and not cursings, and with my power, saith the Lord, and shall be without condemnation on earth, and in heaven; for I am the Lord thy God, and will be with thee even unto the end of the world, and through all eternity: for verily, I seal upon you, your exaltation, and prepare a throne for you in the kingdom of my Father, with Abraham, your father. Behold, I have seen your sacrifices, and will forgive all your sins; I have seen your sacrifices, in obedience to that which I have told you: go, therefore, and I make a way for your escape, as I accepted the offering of Abraham, of his son Isaac.

20. Verily I say unto you, a commandment I give unto mine handmaid, Emma Smith, your wife, whom I have given unto you, that she stay herself, and partake not of that which I commanded you to offer unto her; for I did it, saith the Lord, to prove you all, as I did Abraham; and that I might require an offering at your hand, by covenant and sacrifice: and let mine handmaid, Emma Smith, receive all those that have been given unto my servant Joseph, and who are virtuous and pure before me; and those who are not pure, and have said they were pure, shall be destroyed, saith the Lord God; for I am the Lord thy God, and ye shall obey my voice; and I give unto my servant Joseph, that he shall be made ruler over many things, for he hath been faithful over a few things, and from henceforth I will strengthen him.

21. And I command mine handmaid, Emma Smith, to abide and cleave unto my servant Joseph, and to none else. But if she will not abide this commandment, she shall be destroyed, saith the Lord; for I am the Lord thy God, and will destroy her if she abide not in my law; but if she will not abide this commandment, then shall my servant Joseph do all things for her, even as he hath said; and I will bless him, and multiply him, and give unto him an hundred fold in this world, of fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, houses and lands, wives and children, and crowns of eternal lives in the eternal worlds. And again, verily I say, let mine handmaid forgive my servant Joseph his trespasses, and then shall she be forgiven her trespasses, wherein she hath trespassed against me; and I the Lord thy God will bless her, and multiply her, and make her heart to rejoice.

22. And again, I say, let not my servant Joseph put his property out of his hands, lest an enemy come and destroy him, for Satan seeketh to destroy; for I am the Lord thy God, and he is my servant; and behold! and lo, I am with him, as I was with Abraham, thy father, even unto his exaltation and glory.

23. Now as touching the law of the priesthood, there are many things pertaining thereunto. Verily, if a man be called of my Father, as was Aaron, by mine own voice, and by the voice of him that sent me, and I have endowed him with the keys of the power of this priesthood, if he do anything in my name, and according to my law, and by my word, he will not commit sin, and I will justify him. Let no one, therefore, set on my servant Joseph; for I will justify him; for he shall do the sacrifice which I require at his hands, for his transgressions, saith the Lord your God.

24. And again, as pertaining to the law of the priesthood;—if any man espouse a virgin, and desire to espouse another, and the first give her consent; and if he espouse the second, and they are virgins, and have

vowed to no other man, then is he justified; he cannot commit adultery, for they are given unto him; for he cannot commit adultery with that, that belongeth unto him, and to none else: and if he have ten virgins given unto him by this law, he cannot commit adultery; for they belong to him; and they are given unto him;—therefore is he justified. But if one, or either of the ten virgins, after she is espoused, shall be with another man, she has committed adultery, and shall be destroyed; for they are given unto him to multiply and replenish the earth, according to my commandment, and to fulfil the promise which was given by my Father before the foundation of the world; and for their exaltation in the eternal worlds, that they may bear the souls of men; for herein is the work of my Father continued, that he may be glorified.

25. And again, verily, verily I say unto you, if any man have a wife who holds the keys of this power, and he teaches unto her the law of my priesthood, as pertaining to these things; then shall she believe, and administer unto him, or she shall be destroyed, saith the Lord your God; for I will destroy her; for I will magnify my name upon all those who receive and abide in my law. Therefore, it shall be lawful in me, if she receive not this law, for him to receive all things, whatsoever I the Lord his God will give unto him, because she did not believe and administer unto him, according to my word; and she then becomes the transgressor, and he is exempt from the law of Sarah, who administered unto Abraham according to the law, when I commanded Abraham to take Hagar to wife.—And now, as pertaining to this law,—verily, verily I say unto you, I will reveal more unto you, hereafter; therefore, let this suffice for the present.—Behold, I am Alpha and Omega:—AMEN.”

PLURALITY OF WIVES is a doctrine very popular among most of mankind at the present day. It is

practiced by the most powerful nations of Asia and Africa, and by numerous nations, inhabiting the Islands of the sea, and by the Aboriginal nations of the great Western Hemisphere. The one wife system is confined principally to a few small nations, inhabiting Europe and to those who are of European origin, inhabiting America. It is estimated by the most able historians of our day that about four-fifths of the population of the globe, believe and practice, according to their respective laws, the doctrine of a Plurality of Wives. If the popularity of a doctrine is in proportion to the numbers who believe in it, then it follows that the *Plurality system* is four times more popular among the inhabitants of the earth, than the *one wife* system.

Those nations who practice the Plurality doctrine consider it as virtuous and as right for one man to have many wives, as to have one only. Therefore, they have enacted laws, not only giving this right to their citizens, but also protecting them in it, and punishing all those who infringe upon the chastity of the marriage covenant by committing adultery with any one of the wives of his neighbor. Those nations do not consider it possible for a man to commit adultery with any one of those women to whom he has been legally married according to their laws. The posterity raised up unto the husband through each of his wives, are all considered to be legitimate, and provisions are made in their laws for those children, the same as if they were the children of one wife. Adulteries, fornications, and all unvirtuous conduct between the sexes, are severely punished by them. Indeed, Plurality among them is considered, not only virtuous and right, but a great check or preventative against adulteries and unlawful connections which are among the greatest evils with which nations are cursed, producing a vast amount of suffering and misery, devastation and death; undermining the very foundations of happiness, and destroying the frame-work of society, and the peace of the domestic circle.

Some of the nations of Europe who believe in the one wife system have actually forbidden a plurality of wives by their laws; and the consequences are that the whole country among them is overrun with the most abominable practices? adulteries and unlawful connections prevail through all their villages, towns, cities, and country places to a most fearful extent. And among some of these nations these sinks of wickedness, wretchedness, and misery, are licensed by law; while their piety would be wonderfully shocked to authorize by law the Plurality system, as adopted by many neighboring nations.

The Constitution and laws of the United States, being founded upon the principles of freedom, do not interfere with marriage relations, but leave the nation free to believe in and practice the doctrine of a Plurality of wives, or to confine themselves to the one wife system just as they choose. This is as it should be; it leaves the conscience of man untrammelled, and so long as he injures no person, and does not infringe upon the rights of others, he is free by the Constitution to marry one wife, or many, or none at all, and becomes accountable to God, for the righteousness or unrighteousness of his domestic relations.

The Constitution leaves the several States and Territories to enact such laws as they see proper in regard to Marriages, provided that they do not infringe upon the rights of conscience and the liberties guaranteed in that sacred document. Therefore, if any State or Territory feels disposed to enact laws, guaranteeing to each of its citizens the right to marry many wives, such laws would be perfectly constitutional; hence, the several States and Territories practice the one wife system out of choice, and not because they are under any obligations so to do by the National Constitution. Indeed, we doubt very much, whether any State or Territory has the constitutional right to make laws, prohibiting the Plurality doctrine in cases where it is practiced by religious societies, as a matter of conscience or

as a doctrine of their religious faith. The first Article of the Amendments to the Constitution says, expressly, that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or *prohibiting the free exercise thereof*." Now if even Congress, itself, has no power to pass a law "prohibiting the free exercise of Religion," much less has any State or Territory power to pass such an act.

The doctrine of a Plurality of Wives was believed and practised by Abraham, the father of the faithful; and we find that while in this practice the angels of God frequently ministered to him, and at one time dined with him; and God manifested Himself to him, and entered into familiar conversation with him. Neither God nor His angels reproved Abraham for being a Polygamist, but on the contrary, the Almighty greatly blessed him and made promises unto him, concerning both Isaac and Ishmael, clearly showing that Abraham practiced what is called, Polygamy, under the sanction of the Almighty. Now if the father of the faithful was thus blessed, certainly it should not be considered irreligious for the faithful who are called his children to walk in the steps of their father Abraham. Indeed, if the Lord, Himself, through His holy prophets, should give more wives unto his servants, as He gave them unto the prophet David, it would be a great sin for them to refuse that which He gives. In such a case, it would become a matter of conscience with them, and a part of their religion, and they would be bound to exercise their faith in this doctrine, and practice it, or be condemned; therefore, Congress would have no power to prohibit the free exercise of this part of their religion; neither would the States or Territories have power, Constitutionally, to pass a law "prohibiting the free exercise thereof." Now a certain religious society, called Shakers, believe it to be wrong for them to marry even one wife; it certainly would be unconstitutional for either the Congress or the States to pass a law, compelling all people to marry

at a certain age, because it would infringe upon the rights of conscience among the Shakers, and they would be prohibited the free exercise of their religion.

From the foregoing Revelation, given through Joseph, the Seer, it will be seen that God has actually commanded some of His servants to take more wives, and has pointed out certain duties in regard to the marriage ceremony, showing that they must be married for time and for all eternity, and showing the advantages to be derived in a future state by this eternal union, and showing, still further, that, if they refused to obey this command, after having the law revealed to them, they should be damned. This revelation, then, makes it a matter of conscience among all the Latter-Day Saints; and they embrace it as a part and portion of their religion, and verily believe that they cannot be saved and reject it. Has Congress power, then, to pass laws, "prohibiting" the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, "*the free exercise*" of this article of their religion? Have any of the States or Territories a constitutional right to pass laws "prohibiting the free exercise of the religion" which the church of the Saints conscientiously and sincerely believe to be essential to their salvation? No: they have no such right.

The Latter-Day Saints have the most implicit confidence in all the revelations, given through Joseph, the prophet; and they would much sooner lay down their lives and suffer martyrdom, than to deny the least revelation that was ever given to him. In one of the revelations through him, we read that God raised up wise men and inspired them to write the Constitution of our country, that the freedom of the people might be maintained, according to the free agency which He had given to them; that every man might be accountable to God and not to man, so far as religious doctrines and conscience are concerned. And the more we exam-

ine that sacred instrument, framed by the wisdom of our illustrious fathers, the more we are compelled to believe that an invisible power controlled, dictated, and guided them in laying the foundation of liberty and freedom upon this great Western Hemisphere. To this land the Mahomedan—the Hindoo—the Chinese can emigrate and each bring with him his score of wives and his hundred children, and the glorious Constitution of our country will not interfere with his domestic relations. Under the broad banner of the Constitution he is protected in all his family associations: none have a right to tare any of his wives or his children from him. So likewise, under the broad folds of the Constitution, the Legislative Assembly of the Territory of Utah have the right to pass laws, regulating their matrimonial relations, and protecting each of their citizens in the right of marrying, one or many wives, as the case may be. If Congress should repeal those laws, they could not do so on the ground of their being unconstitutional. And even, if Congress should repeal them, there still would be no law in Utah, prohibiting the free exercise of that religious right: neither do the citizens of Utah feel disposed to pass such an unconstitutional act which would infringe upon the most sacred rights of conscience.

Tradition and custom have great influence over nations. Long established customs, whether right or wrong, become sacred in the estimation of Mankind. Those nations who have been accustomed from time immemorial to the practice of what is called Polygamy, would consider a law abolishing it, as the very height of injustice and oppression; the very idea of being limited to the one wife system, would be considered not only oppressive and unjust, but absolutely absurd and ridiculous; it would be considered an innovation upon the long established usages, customs, and laws of numerous and powerful nations—an innovation of

the most dangerous character, calculated to destroy the most sacred rights and privileges of family associations—to upset the very foundations of individual rights, rendered dear and sacred by being handed down to them from the most remote ages of antiquity.

On the other hand, the European nations who have been for centuries restricted by law to the one wife theory, would consider it a shocking innovation upon the customs of their fathers to abolish their restrictive laws, and to give freedom and liberty, according to the plurality system. It is custom, then, in a great degree, that forms the conscience of nations and individuals in regard to the marriage relationships. Custom causes four-fifths of the population of the globe to decide that Polygamy, as it is called, is a good, and not an evil practice; custom causes the balance, or the remaining fifth, to decide in opposition to the great majority.

Those individuals who have strength of mind sufficient to divest themselves entirely from the influence of custom, and examine the doctrine of a Plurality of Wives under the light of reason and Revelation, will be forced to the conclusion that it is a doctrine of Divine origin; that it was embraced and practised under the Divine sanction, by the most righteous men who ever lived on the earth; holy Prophets and Patriarchs who were inspired by the Holy Ghost—who were enwrapped in the visions of the Almighty—who conversed with holy angels—who saw God face to face, and talked with Him as a man talks with his friend—were “Polygamists,” that is, they had many wives—raised up many children by them—and were never reprov’d, by the Holy Ghost, nor by Angels, nor by the Almighty for believing in and practicing such a doctrine; on the contrary, each one of these “Polygamists” received, by revelation, promises and blessings for himself, for his wives, and for his

numerous children, born unto him by his numerous wives. Moreover, the Lord, Himself, gave revelation to different wives, belonging to the same man, revealing to them the great blessings which should rest upon their posterity; angels also were sent to comfort and bless them; and in no instance do we find them reproved for having joined themselves in marriage to a "Polygamist." Indeed, the Lord, Himself, gave laws, not to prohibit "Polygamy," but showing His will in relation to the children raised up by the different wives of the same man; and furthermore, the Lord, Himself, actually officiated in giving David all the wives of Saul; this occurred, too, when David already had several wives which he had previously taken: therefore, as the Lord did actually give into David's own bosom all the wives of Saul, He must not only have sanctioned "Polygamy," but established and instituted it upon a sure foundation by giving the wives, Himself, the same as he gave Eve to Adam. Therefore, those who are completely divested from the influence of National customs, and who judge concerning this matter by the word of God, are compelled to believe, that the Plurality of wives was once sanctioned, for many ages, by the Almighty; and by a still further research of the Divine oracles, they find no intimations that this Divine institution was ever repealed. It was an institution, not originated under the law of Moses, but it was of a far more ancient date; and instead of being abolished by that law, it was sanctioned and perpetuated: and when Christ came to fulfil that law, and to do it away by the introduction of a better Covenant, He did not abolish the plurality system: not being originated under that law, it was not made null and void when that law was done away. Indeed, there were many things in connection with the law that were not abolished when the law was fulfilled; as for instance, the ten commandments which the people under

the gospel covenant were still obliged to obey; and until we can find some law of God abolishing and prohibiting a plurality of wives, we are compelled to believe it a Divine institution; and we are, furthermore, compelled to believe, that if this institution be entered into now, under the same principles which governed the holy Prophets and Patriarchs, that God will approbate it now as much as He did then; and that the persons who do thus practice it conscientiously and sincerely, are just as honorable in the sight of God, as those who have but one wife. And that which is honorable before God should be honorable before men; and no one should be despised when he acts in all good conscience upon any principle of doctrine; neither should there be laws in any of these States or Territories to compel any individual to act in violation to the dictates of his own conscience: but every one should be left in all matters of religion to his own choice, and thus become accountable to God, and not to his fellow man.

If the people of this country have generally formed different conclusions from us upon this subject; and if they have embraced religions which are more congenial to their minds than the religion of the Saints, we say to them that they are welcome to their own religious views; the laws should not interfere with the exercise of their religious rights. If we cannot convince you by reason nor by the word of God, that your religion is wrong, we will not persecute you, but will sustain you in the privileges, guaranteed in the great Charter of American Liberty: we ask from you the same generosity—protect us in the exercise of our religious rights—convince us of our errors of doctrine, if we have any, by reason, by logical arguments, or by the word of God, and we will be ever grateful for the information, and you will ever have the pleasing reflection that you have been instruments in the hands of God of redeeming your fellow beings

from the darkness which you may see enveloping their minds. Come, then, let us reason together, and try to discover the true light upon all subjects, connected with our temporal or eternal happiness; and if we disagree, in our judgments, let us im-

pute it to the weakness and imperfections of our fallen natures, and let us pity each other, and endeavor with patience and meekness to reclaim from error, and save the immortal soul from an endless death.

(To be continued.)

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CONTENTS.

Propectus of the Seer.....	1
First Epistle of Orson Pratt.....	2
Celestial Marriage.....	7
Catalogue of Works.....	16

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